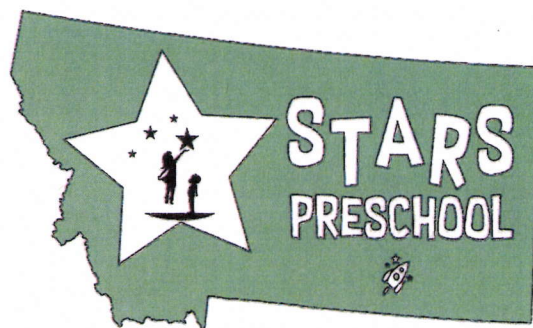**STARS Preschool is good for our kids.**
- We know that pre-k programs ensure all children arrive at kindergarten ready to learn. The research is clear on that.
- Quality pre-k programs not only prepare children for reading and math, but also for paying attention, following directions, and getting along with others.
- Children with high-quality early learning opportunities are more likely to:
  - read at grade level;
  - graduate from high school; and
  - earn more money.

STARS Preschool is good for families.
- Preschool provides more options for our young Montana families who want to provide their children with the best start.
- More than 60% of children in Montana live in households where all parents work.
- The average cost of childcare for a four-year-old in Montana is $7,900
  - That is 13% of the average family's income
  - 25% of a single mother's income
- The high cost and limited access to high-quality programs across Montana means that many children do not have the opportunity to build a solid foundation for learning down the road.

STARS Preschool is good for our economy.
- Every $1 spent on high-quality pre-k programs creates $7 in future savings to the communities and states that invest.
- Preschool is an investment in our communities, our kids and the workforce of tomorrow.
- Montana spends $80 million per biennium (state dollars) on special education, $130 million on Child and Family Services Division and $160 million on DOC secure care.
- We know that early interventions such as pre-K have more impact than any other preventative measure and will result in savings down the road to the state for special education, child protection services, corrections, and safety net programs.

STARS Preschool Program – general background
- Until last year, Montana was one of only six states that had not invested state funds for public preschool.
- HB 639, championed by Governor Bullock and approved with bipartisan support from the 2017 Legislature, directs $6 million over two years to DPHHS to implement a pilot preschool program.
- Seventeen programs were selected through a competitive grant process to participate in the pilot and expand access to high-quality preschool for Montana children and families.
- Grantees represent diverse group of rural and urban communities, as well as public school, Head Start and private child care providers.
- Over 300 children are enrolled in STARS Preschool classrooms.
- 60% of children served in STARS preschool classrooms are "high needs," meaning they fall into one or more of these categories: low income, receiving special services, engaged in mental health services and supports, enrolled tribal members, children of teen parents, homeless or at risk of being homeless.
- Visit www.starspreschool.mt.gov for more information.

Additional information on STARS Preschool (HB 639)

Cost allocation breakdown

Program Type	Public School	Private	Head Start
FY18 allocations	$1,348,366	$817,792	$215,591
FY18 enrollment	163	111	33
Per child cost	$8,272	$7,367	$6,533

Rural/Urban (classrooms)

	Class AA	Class A	Class B
Public	5	2	2
Private	3	3	2
Head Start	1	1	0
Total	9	6	4

*School District Size (based on High School enrollment). Class AA: 779+, Class A 307-778, Class B: 108-306, Class C: 1-107

Enrollment

Program Name	Student Enrollment	Count of Students High Needs Identified	% of Student High Needs Identified by Program Type	% of Student High Needs Identified Program-Wide
Head Start	18	17	94%	6%
Private	110	47	43%	16%
Public	162	109	67%	38%
Total	290	173		**60%**

*of note, Head Start added a classroom after initial data collection, they are not included in this set of data

High needs children served

- While not required, programs are encouraged to prioritize at least 25% of classroom slots to children who are high needs. High needs includes: low income, children receiving special services, children who are engaged in mental health services and supports, children who are enrolled tribal members, children of teen parents, children who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. *Note children may fall into more than one category.
- Children were considered high needs based on enrollment/participation in a program or service, parent information, or information obtained from the program itself.

Student Demographics (based on voluntary survey data, 83% participated in the survey)

Household Size	
3 or Less	20%
4-6	73%
7 or More	7%
Total	100%

Family Income	
Less than $10,000	9%
$11,000 - $30,000	19%
$31,000- $50,000	18%
$51,000 - $70,000	25%
Over $71,000	29%
Total	100%

Ethnicity	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	11%
Asian	0%
Black	0%
Hispanic/Latino	4%
White	79%
Two or More Races	5%
Total	100%